

The Musical World.

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MISS DOLBY begs to announce that her second and last Soirée Musicale will take place at her residence, 3, Hinde-street, Manchester-square, on Thursday the 20th instant, to commence at half past eight precisely, when she will be assisted by Mrs. Tennant, Miss Amy Dolby, Messrs. Tennant, George Dolby, Lindsay Sloper, Saindon, Piatti, and George Russell. Tickets, 10s. 6d. each, to be obtained of Messrs. Cramer, & Co., 201, Regent-street, Messrs. Addison, 210, Regent-street, and of Miss Dolby, at her residence.

ROYAL PANOPTICON.—Monday, the 17th instant, being the ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF BEETHOVEN, the Organist of the above Institution, Mr. Edmund Chipp, will perform on the Grand Organ Selections from the Works of that Great Composer. Principal performances at 12.30 p.m., 3 p.m., and 8.30 p.m.

EXTRA NIGHT ON CHRISTMAS EVE.—LONDON
SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY, EXETER HALL.—On Monday, December 24th, will be repeated Handel's Sacred Oratorio, MESSIAH, preceded by the Hymn of the Allied Armies—G. Linley. Principal Vocalists: Miss Whitham (pupil of Sir George Smart), Mrs. A. Gilbert, Miss M. Wells, Miss S. Cole, Mr. George Forster, and Mr. Lawler. Trumpet Obligato, Mr. Harper. Leader, Mr. H. Blagrove. Organist, Mr. T. Jolley. The Band and Chorus on an extensive scale. Conductor—Mr. SURMAN (Founder of the Exeter Hall Oratorios). The Subscription to the Society is One, Two, or Three Guineas per annum. Subscribers to the Reserved Seats will receive Four Tickets to this Concert. Single Tickets, Area, One Shilling; Western Gallery, 2s.; Reserved Seats in the Area, Rows, 3s.; Central Area Reserved Seats, with cushions, 5s. To be had, by early application, at the principal Music-sellers, and at the Office of the Society, No. 9, Exeter Hall, where may be obtained a complete Copy of the "Messiah" for 3s. 6d.; "Creation," 2s. 6d.—Surman's Edition.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY—EXETER HALL.
Conductor, Mr. Costa. **FRIDAY NEXT, HANDEL'S MESSIAH.** The orchestra, the most extensive in Exeter-hall, will consist of (including 16 double basses) nearly 700 performers. Gallery Reserved Tickets, 5s.; Central Area, numbered seats, 10s. 6d. each; at the Society's office, 6, in Exeter-hall. This performance will be repeated on Friday, 21st December. 3s. and 5s. Area Tickets, as well as those for the other parts of the Hall, are now issued. The subscription is One, Two, or Three Guineas. Subscribers now entering receive Double Tickets for this Performance. Mr. Macfarren's Analysis of the Messiah and Creation, with book of words, may be had at 6d. each, or will be sent on receipt of 12 postage stamps. Country societies will be supplied at a reduction of 25 per cent. by taking 100 copies.

ST. MARTIN'S-HALL.—HANDEL'S MESSIAH will be performed on Wednesday, Dec. 19, under the direction of Mr. John Hullah. Principal vocalists—Madame Clara Novello, Miss Julia Blendin, Miss Palmer, Mr. Lockey, Mr. Thomas. Tickets 1s. and 2s. 6d., stalls 5s., may be had of the music-sellers, and at St. Martin's hall. Commence at half-past seven o'clock.

MAD. JENNY GOLDSCHMIDT-LIND, EXETER-HALL, MONDAY EVENING NEXT, December 17.—Mr. MITCHELL respectfully announces that Mendelssohn's Oratorio of ELIJAH will be performed on Monday next. Principal singers: Madame Goldschmidt, Miss Dolby, Miss Messent, Mr. Lockey, Mr. Lawler, and Mr. H. Braham. Doors open at 7, to commence at 8. Haydn's Oratorio of THE CREATION will be repeated during the Christmas Week, on Thursday Evening, Dec. 27, in which Madame Goldschmidt will sing the principal soprano part. The chorus and orchestra for these performances will consist of more than 600 performers. Conductor—M. Benedict. Price of admission:—Seats in the Area, 7s.; West Gallery and Body of the Hall, 10s. 6d.; Reserved and numbered Seats, One Guinea. Tickets and full particulars may be obtained at Mitchell's Royal Library, 33, Old Bond-street.

M. JULLIEN.—Royal Conservatory of Music, 213, Regent-street. Applications for admission into the classes for orchestral instruments received every Thursday until further notice. Full particulars of the laws and rules will be shortly advertised.

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ORGAN.

ORGAN OF ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL, WINDSOR.

This instrument—long celebrated as one of the most effective of the older cathedral or collegiate chapel organs—is now in process of re-erection after another course of alteration and improvement, at the hands of Messrs. Gray and Davison, sufficiently extensive, this time, to be called a complete re-construction. The organ in its original state was interesting as, probably, the very best specimen of its builder's (Green's) workmanship extant. The material of its metal pipes was of unusual excellence, their composition nearly throughout containing fifty per cent. of pure tin; the wood pipes were nearly all of red deal, and the voicing of the whole possessed that peculiar grace and suavity for which the builder's style of tone was celebrated. The reeds, only, were unworthy of the rest. They were in Green's best manner, undoubtedly; but it is needless to add that this manner was not comparable to that of the modern reed-voicers, nor, even, to that of his immediate predecessors, the Byfields. They have been, however, from time to time replaced by modern reed-stops, and, with the present re-construction of the instrument, the last remnants of the original work of this kind have, we believe, disappeared. The mechanical arrangements, too, of the Windsor organ were unusually good for their date. Green, indeed, was a true artist in his way, and took delight in the progress of his craft to an extent by no means too common among those who now follow it. The details of the workmanship were excellent, and—except that more boldness than discretion was displayed in the arrangement by which the front and back of the exterior case were made to support the whole weight of the swell sound-board, pipes, and box—no fault could reasonably be found with the general construction. A curious piece of mechanism was originally appended to the bellows, and designed to correct the known tendency of the descent of the upper board of the reservoir to increase the density of the wind. It consisted of a system of gradually increasing counterpoise, acting by means of a rope coiled round a snail-pulley, in opposition to the descent of the bellows; and though far inferior in elegance and simplicity to the "inverted rib" principle, subsequently introduced for the same purpose, operated sufficiently well for every practical purpose. This apparatus was removed, many years ago, by the late Mr. Gray, at the time when he provided the organ with new bellows; and, if organ-builders had chanced to have founded a museum of the older contrivances of their art—which, by the way, might be as useful as some other antique collections, were it only for the purpose of settling the novelty of inventions one now and then hears of—this might have been worth preserving as the most ingenious and effective of several contemporary expedients for curing a notorious defect. Once more, to revert to the tone of the Windsor organ. In order to carry out the improvements just perfected, it was necessary to erect it complete, with the exception of the pedal organ, in Messrs. Gray and Davison's factory; and this, when done, afforded unmistakeable evidence of the extent to which the character of many old organs is assisted by the acoustic properties of the buildings in which they are heard. In St. George's Chapel this instrument was not only sweet but powerful;—visitors, acquainted with the subject, were accustomed to notice that its full-organ reverberated through the building with an effect of grandeur and force certainly not indicated by the amount of its contents. Nevertheless, in Messrs. Gray and Davison's erecting-room, which is, beyond doubt, the largest and most advantageous place of the kind in the kingdom, no one who heard it could fail to be struck with the weakness and singular want of *solidity* in its tone. To say that it sounded *thin* would be no exact expression of its peculiarity. Added to this, there was an absence of decision which strangely contrasted with its effect when in its proper position. Now, in this case, it is evident that, besides the mellowing properties of space in concealing defects, the size of the building and the position of the organ absolutely operate, and that very largely, in magnifying its tone: and it seems certain that if, at any time, a fashionable ecclesiastical notion should cause it to be removed from its present site on the screen and placed in some side-

chapel or other condemned-hole of mediæval music, its tone and its builder's reputation would alike be dissipated—Messrs. Gray and Davison's new and fine reeds notwithstanding.

It is now time to describe what has been done to the Windsor organ. The whole of its mechanical interior, its frame-work, bellows, sound-boards (except that of the swell, which was put in but a few years since), keys, and movements of every kind, are new. In the pipe-department, besides some minor changes, a new trumpet and clarion have been furnished to the great organ, and three new stops added to the pedal organ. Its contents, as now completed, stand thus:—

GREAT ORGAN.		
(Compass F F F to F in alt.)		
1. Open Diapason (metal throughout) ...	8 feet	
2. Do. do. ...	8 "	
3. Principal ...	4 "	
4. Twelfth ...	3 "	
5. Fifteenth ...	2 "	
6. Sesquialtera ...	3 ranks	
7. Mixture ...	2 "	
8. Posanne ...	8 feet	
9. Clarion ...	4 "	
10. Claribella (to middle C) ...	8 "	
CHOIR ORGAN.		
(Compass same as Great.)		
1. Dulciana (to Gamut G) ...	8 feet	
2. Stopped Diapason Bass ...	8 "	
3. Do. Treble ...	8 "	
4. Keraulophon (Tenor C) ...	8 "	
5. Principal ...	4 "	
6. Flute ...	4 "	
7. Piccolo ...	2 "	
8. Corno di Bassetto ...	8 "	
SWELL ORGAN.		
(Compass F F to F in alt.)		
1. Double Diapason ...	16 feet	
2. Open Diapason ...	8 "	
3. Bourdon ...	16 "	
4. Trombone ...	16 "	
PEDAL ORGAN.		
(One Octave and a-half, from F F F F).		
1. Double Diapason ...	16 feet	
2. Open Diapason ...	8 "	
3. Bourdon ...	16 "	
4. Trombone ...	16 "	
COPULÆ.		
1. Swell to Pedals.		
2. Great to Pedals.		
3. Choir to Pedals.		
4. Swell to Great.		
5. Swell to Choir		
6. Choir sub-Octave to Great.		

All this work, we are bound to say, has been completed in excellent style. Expense and care have nowhere been stinted, and, as a result, the structural arrangements and finish of details are the best we have yet seen from Messrs. Gray and Davison's factory. The usual fault of English organs, want of sufficient internal space, still remains an evil here; but from this the builders had no escape. The dimensions of the original case were to be rigidly preserved, and, thus circumscribed, we know not in what way the available room could have been more advantageously disposed of. Two very noticeable things occur in the mechanism. The pallets of the pedal organ are of a novel construction, are very light and noiseless, present a large sectional area of opening with a small amount of motion, and, though not positively equilibrated, offer but slight resistance to the opposing air-pressure. They have the advantage, also, of opening two grooves of the sound-board at once; and, although this is not done in a manner to admit of two distinct weights of wind, it is highly useful in separately alimending different portions of the pedal organ. The draw-stops of the great and swell organs operate on their respective slides by means of a new form of the pneumatic apparatus, which is remarkably simple, elegant, and efficacious; and by the intervention of which, also, the composition pedals act with an ease and celerity quite unknown to those necessary but clumsy contrivances in general. The introduction and working out of these little novelties do great credit to the builders.

All that is new in the matter of tone merits unqualified praise. The trumpet and clarion of the great organ (having tubes of very fine metal) are quite in the best style of reed-voicing; and the new stops of the pedal organ are equally admirable. The FFFF trombone is of the free-reed variety. This species of pedal reed, altogether new to English practice, has been adopted,

* This is not, of course, the length of the pipe. We merely use these figures to denote that this stop is of the *unison pitch* of the Pedal Organ—that is, so far as such a mongrel arrangement can be said to have any pitch at all.

we think, wisely in this case. The quality of the percussive reed deteriorates rapidly below the 16 feet C. As its vibrations grow slower, the blows struck by the tongue on the lips of the reed become more and more distinctly separable by the ear, until, at length, in the lower half of the 32 feet octave, a rapid and not agreeable sound of *hammering* takes the place of genuine tone. This can never be the case with a reed of the free kind; and the notes we have heard, as finished for the Windsor organ, completely justify the experiment. They are quite sufficiently powerful, and are perfectly round and smooth in quality. Among the alterations, however, there is one of which we can by no means approve. A few years since, one of the unison reeds in the swell was, by the desire of the organist, Dr. Elvey, taken out and its place occupied by a double-trumpet,—a change which, necessarily, imparted to this clavier an effect of volume and dignity of which no other single stop was capable. Now, however, Dr. Elvey seems to have changed his mind, for the double-trumpet is removed and a cornopean substituted. This is a march backwards which we are sorry to have to record. The new cornopean is a fine stop, certainly, but can never exercise the influence on the general grandeur of the swell organ possessed by its predecessor.

Where, for once in a way, a dean and chapter have been found willing to spend so much money in renovating their organ, and where so much work has been so excellently done, it appears hard that any room should be gratuitously left for censure. Yet much there is, we regret to say, in the present case. We find, for instance, the original compass—(FFF on the keys, and FFFF on the pedals)—still retained in all the fulness of its antiquated perversity. It is too much, perhaps, to expect from Dr. Elvey, or any other man, that he should abandon his educational persuasions all at one blow. We could not have hoped, for instance, for his consent to the reduction of his manual claviars to the legitimate CC compass. Perhaps, even, something of an amiable, but often obstructive, reverence for antiquity on the part of those who are "seized in fee" of Samuel Green's "priceless" pipes, might have interfered with this amputative process. But why not have brought the pedal organ to the now all but universal range of two and-a-half octaves from CCC upwards? Every reason is in favour of this mode, and surely nothing but prejudice can be against it. In the first place, not one solitary pipe of Green's would be touched, for nothing did that worthy organ-builder contribute to this part of the instrument. Secondly, as the present open FFFF pipes are of the cumbersome scale that was in fashion when they were made, they could be converted into an admirable 32 feet stop by simple lengthening, without shift of position; and on their substratum such a complete pedal organ could be formed as can never possibly exist on the present plan. Thirdly, to accommodate tender consciences, and to avoid a waste of old Green's manual basses, two sorts of pedal couplers could be introduced; as at St. Sepulchre's; so that those who had a preference for pure basses might play them, and, equally, those who admired old-fashioned distortions of passages, might be gratified. And, lastly, both organists and organ-builders would have been spared the charge of sharing in the continuance of a system which not only renders the just performance of music impossible, but can be proved to violate, both structurally and musically, the whole theory of organ-building. In addition to all this, we are bound to express our conviction that no organists, either in designing the construction of a new instrument or the alteration of an old one, has a right to tie up his successors to his own notions, when those notions are opposed to all but universal practice. If he do but agree with the world on the broad principles of structure, he may loose the reins of his fancy for details to any extent he pleases,—whoever comes after him may use or discard his novelties without damage to the rights of organ-playing. But not so as to such a fundamental point as that we have now in view. His privilege of gratifying his own prepossessions at the expense of others who may have a wider field of experience cannot conscientiously extend as far as this. Dr. Elvey is, certainly, a man in the prime of life; yet, in the nature of things, he must have a successor. And unless that successor be able to persuade the purse-bearers of St.

George's Chapel to spend a large sum of money in undoing what Dr. Elvey has done—no very probable event, we imagine—he will be forced to rest content with playing the organ as Germany has never played it, and as, within the last twenty years, England has only seen it played in a few isolated cases. To him, for instance, a fugue of Sebastian Bach will be an impossible luxury; and though her Majesty and Prince Albert may, perhaps, have an exceptional disinclination to this German production, and though the dean and canons may have not a whit more appetite for its beauties, he might keenly face the privation—so keenly, perhaps, as to wish his predecessor—anywhere but where he was.

On another important point—though certainly subordinate to that we have just mentioned—a great mistake has, we think, been committed. The old system of tuning has been retained; whereas, in course of such a wholesale renovation as this, the equal temperament should certainly have been introduced. It is known, however, that the change of temperament necessitates a change of pitch in certain parts of the scale, and thus again, we believe, it happens that a reverence for the immaculate integrity of Samuel Green's pipes has stepped in the way of improvement. We need not point out to anybody acquainted with the matter, that the cutting of a quarter or half-an-inch from the length of a fine pipe will in no wise damage its quality. Reeds, only, might be perilled by an alteration of pitch; but as not one of Green's reeds, we believe, remains in the organ, we do not see how the fame of that venerated artist could be put in jeopardy by the process of equal-tuning.

Meanwhile, all that has been done to the Windsor organ has been admirably done. Messrs. Green and Davison have most loyally fulfilled their part in the transaction, and it can be in no wise attributable to them that so large a quantity of work has not ended in a perfect result.

CHACUN A SON INSTRUMENT.—"Nothing"—exclaims Uvedale Price, on "the Picturesque," in 1794—"so contracts the mind as a little practical dexterity, unassisted and uncorrected by general knowledge and observation, and by a study of the great masters of the art. An artist whose mind has been so contracted, refers everything to his own narrow circle of ideas and execution, and wishes to confine within that circle all of mankind. I remember a gentleman, who played very prettily on the flute, abusing all Händel's music; and, to give me every advantage, like a generous adversary, he defied me to name one good chorus of his writing. It may well be supposed that I did not accept the challenge; *c'était bien l'embaras des richesses*; and, indeed, he was right in his own way of considering them—for there is not one that would be effective on his instrument. Roughness, in its different modes and degrees, is the ornament, the fringe of beauty—that which gives it life and spirit, and preserves it from baldness and insipidity. The most beautiful of all sounds, that of the human voice, appears to the greatest advantage when there is some degree of sharpness in the instrument that accompanies it, as in the harp, the violin, and the harpsichord. The flute, or even the organ, have too much of the same quality of sound: they give no relief to the voice; it is like accompanying smooth water with smooth banks. Often in the sweetest and most flowing melodies, discords (which are analogous to angles and sharpness) are introduced to relieve the ear from that languor and weariness which long-continued smoothness always brings on; yet will any one say, that considered separately, the sound of a harpsichord is as *beautiful* as that of a flute, or of a human voice, or that they ought to be classed together?—or that discords are as *beautiful* as concords, or that both are *beautiful* because, when they are mixed with judgment, the whole is more *delightful*? Does not this show that what is very justly called *beautiful*, from the essential qualities of beauty being predominant, is frequently, nay generally, composite, and that we act against the constant practice of nature, and of judicious art, when we endeavour to make objects more beautiful by depriving them of what gives beauty some of its most powerful attractions."—Uvedale Price on the "Picturesque," 1794.

CONVERSATIONS WITH ROSSINI.*

BY FERDINAND HILLER.

(Continued from page 783.)

CHAPTER VIII.

"Does Spohr still play the violin much?" asked Rossini, one day.

"He still plays magnificently," I replied, "but only in select circles."

"I regret that I never had the pleasure of hearing him," said the maestro. "Festa, in Naples, who was especially distinguished in quartets, always used to speak to me of him with the greatest enthusiasm, and said he was indebted to him for his best qualities. He had not been precisely a pupil of his, but had associated a great deal with him at Naples. He was never tired of praising Spohr's grand tone and splendid execution."

"Perhaps no one excelled him in this respect," I observed. "But you heard Paganini very often, maestro, did you not?"

"For a great many years he was almost constantly near me," replied Rossini. "He asserted that he followed my star, as he called it, and I did not often go anywhere without his coming after me. He would remain whole days and nights with me, while I was composing."

"Was he, also, interesting in conversation?" I enquired.

"He was full of original notions; a strange fellow. But how talented!" said Rossini.

"A genius!" I remarked.

"You should have heard him play at sight. He looked over half a page at one glance. You know his adventure with Lafont, in Milan, do you not?" asked Rossini.

"It was often alluded to in the papers," said I, "but"—

"I was there at the time," continued Rossini, interrupting me. "Lafont came to Milan with the strange prejudice that Paganini was a kind of charlatan, and he determined to make short work of him. He invited him, therefore, to play something with himself, at his concert in the Scala. Paganini came and asked me whether he should accept the invitation. 'Yes, you must,' I replied, 'in order that he may not think you want the courage to measure yourself with him.' Lafont sent him the solo part, but Paganini would not have anything to do with it, on the plea that the band rehearsal would be sufficient. At the latter, he played his part very flatly, and simply from the text. In the evening, however, he repeated the variations, that Lafont had to play before him, in octaves, thirds, and sixths, so that the poor Frenchman was plunged into a state of the greatest bewilderment, and did not even play as well as he could. I reproached Paganini for this want of musical loyalty; but he laughed in his sleeve. Lafont, meanwhile, returned to Paris, where Paganini was accounted a charlatan, until he disabused the minds of the Parisians."

"Is it true that he formerly possessed a fuller tone, and played upon thicker strings?" I asked.

"The more difficulties he created, particularly with double and treble notes," answered Rossini, "the thinner naturally were the strings; besides, he was no longer in the possession of his youthful power when he went to Russia, and thus there may be some truth in the assertion. What always most astonished me in him was the rapid alternation from excitement to repose, of which he was capable, when he came to the most daring difficulties after the most passionate *Cantabile*. He was then suddenly like some automaton cast in a mould; I almost believe that even his body became cold."

"Is there a particle of truth in the many wonderful anecdotes related of his earlier life?" I inquired further.

"Not one," replied Rossini. "He held, for a considerable time, an appointment at the court of Prince Bacciocchi, and afterwards travelled about Italy, giving concerts. He could not become rich at this, because Italy is not the country for it."

"And yet he was excessively fond of money, it is said," I observed.

"His avarice was as great as his talent, and that is not saying a little," replied Rossini. "When he was earning thousands in

Paris, he used to go with his son to a *restaurant's* at two francs a-head, where he ordered one dinner for both, and, in addition, carried home a piece of bread and a pear, for his boy's breakfast. He had the strange desire of becoming a baron, and found, too, in Germany, a man who assisted him in the matter, but who made Paganini, by the way, pay him not an inconsiderable sum for so doing. Through anger and annoyance, Paganini had an attack of illness which lasted for months."

"And yet he made Berlioz a really kingly present, did he not?" I inquired, parenthetically.

"All Paris knows such to be the case," said Rossini, shrugging his shoulders. "I must believe it, but, in reality, I hold it is impossible."

"So many wonders happen, my dear maestro," I observed, "that one more or less does not make any difference. Is it not one of the greatest of all wonders that you have not written anything for twenty-two years? What do you do with all the musical ideas which must be whirling about in your brain?"

"You are joking," said the maestro, laughing.

"I am not joking in the least," said I—"How can you exist without composing?"

"What! Would you have me, without a motive, without excitement, without a definite intention, write a definite work? I do not require much to be excited into composition, as my opera-texts prove—but still I do require something."

"It is true that you were often contented with very mediocre librettos," said I.

"Would that that had been all!" exclaimed Rossini. "In Italy, I never had a libretto that was finished, when I began writing;—I used to compose the introduction before the following piece was written. How often, too, did I have for poets men, who, perhaps, did not write badly, but had no idea of what the musician required! I was obliged to work with them, instead of their working for me!"

"That, however, had its advantage, maestro!" said I.

"Yes, if I had not always been compelled to write in a hurry. When I held an appointment under Barbaja, in Naples, I was compelled to look after everything relating to opera, to superintend all rehearsals—Barbaja did not pay a bill that I had not countersigned—and, with all this, I had bound myself to write two operas a-year."

"And wrote four," said I, interrupting him.

"I had sometimes leave of absence, which I turned to account; my whole salary amounted to only 8,000 francs. It is true that I lived in Barbaja's house, and had no household to keep."

"Barbaja must, in his way, have been a man of genial disposition," said I.

"He carried on his affairs with a certain grandeur, and took an especial pride in having the best operas possible," replied Rossini. "He succeeded, too, in attaining his object, although at a considerable pecuniary sacrifice. But he was able to make this sacrifice, because, as farmer of the public plays, he gained immense sums. It was his misfortune, however, to be extraordinarily irritable and vain. He thought he knew everything best, and this caused him to fall out with most people. The buildings he erected swallowed up incalculable sums, and so he ended by leaving his son only a million."

"Only a million!" said I, piteously.

"He might have left him a dozen millions," replied the maestro.

"Then we must certainly pay him the tribute of a tear of compassion," said I.

"What a magnificent orchestra there was then at the San Carlo," exclaimed Rossini. "Festa, of whom I previously spoke to you, was an eminent director. The orchestra then in Naples was, next to that of the Grand-Opéra in Paris, the best that ever existed in a theatre."

"The last is still excellent," said I; "nevertheless it never produced a profound impression on me, as far as strength is concerned."

"The theatre is too large," answered the maestro. "As a general rule, I detest these over-large houses—they kill every thing. The influence of the locality cannot be too highly rated."

* Translated expressly for *The Musical World*.

Transport the orchestra of the Conservatoire, with all its magnificent qualities, to the Grand Operahouse—it would be no longer recognizable."

"Let us transplant ourselves, my dear maestro, into the drawing-room, where our wives are anxiously awaiting us," said I, interrupting the conversation. "If we stop here any longer, we shall get a scolding."

"Eh bien, allons!" said Rossini.

(To be continued.)

OPERA AND DRAMA.

BY RICHARD WAGNER.

(Continued from page 785.)

THE relationship of the tones is, however, musical *harmony*, which we have, at present, first to comprehend according to its extension in the plane in which the members of the families of the far-ramified relationship are [represented as *keys**. If we now retain the *horizontal* extension of harmony that we mean, we reserve explicitly the all-determining property of harmony in its *vertical* extension to its first principle, for the decisive point of our exposition. The horizontal extension, as the surface of harmony, is, however, the physiognomy of the same that is still recognizable to the eye of the poet; it is the surface of the water, which still reflects the form of the poet, just as it also presents the same form to the observant eye of the person with whom the poet desires to communicate. This form is, however, in truth, the poet's realized intention, a realization which, again, is only possible for the musician, when he arises from the depths of the sea of harmony to the surface, on which the entrancing nuptials of the creative poetic intention with the endless power of production of music are celebrated.

The heaving mirrored form is *melody*, in which the poetic thought becomes the involuntarily agitating point of feeling, as the musical capability of feeling obtains from it the faculty of being manifested, decidedly and convincingly, as a human fact, sharply defined, and fashioned into plastic individuality. Melody is the redemption of the endlessly presupposed poetic thought, in the profoundly experienced unconsciousness of the greatest freedom of feeling; it is the wished-for and demonstrated involuntary principle; the conscious and plainly manifested unconscious principle; the justified necessity of an endlessly comprehensive purport, condensed from the most extensive ramification into the most definite utterance of feeling.

If we now hold this melody thus ranged upon the horizontal surface of harmony and appearing as the mirrored form of the poetic thought and of the primitive relationship of the tones through the adoption into one family of this relationship—the key—side by side with that maternal *primitive melody*, out of which verbal language was formerly born, the following particularly important difference, in this case to be decidedly and directly looked at, is displayed.

Out of an endlessly flowing capability of feeling, human sensations were first compressed into a purport, gradually becoming more and more decided, and were then uttered in the primitive melody, mentioned above, in such a manner, that the naturally necessary progress in the latter was finally raised into the development of pure verbal language. The most distinguishing feature in the most ancient lyric poetry is the fact that in it the words and the verse proceeded from the tone and the melody, as the gesture of the body was curtailed from the movement of the dance, merely generally significative, and only intelligible from most frequent repetition, into a more measured and more decided mimic gesture. The more the involuntary capability of feeling was condensed, in the development of the human race, into the arbitrary capability of the understanding; and, consequently, the more the purport of lyric poetry, from being a purport of feeling, became a purport of understanding—the more recognizably is the verbal poem, also, removed from its connection with the primitive

melody, which, to a certain extent, it merely used in its delivery, in order to present as agreeably as possible a colder didactic purport to the old-accustomed feelings. Melody itself, just as it had once bloomed forth from the primitive capability of sensation of man, as a necessary expression of feeling, and in the union, suitable to it, with the word and the gesture, had been developed into that copiousness, which we perceive, even at the present day, in the real folk's-melody, the reflective poets of the understanding were unable to model or vary in a manner suitable to their mode of expression; still less was it possible for them, however, to proceed from this mode of expression itself to the formation of new primitive melodies, precisely because the progress of general development in this great formative period was a progress from out the feelings to the understanding, and the growing understanding could only have felt hindered in its experimentalising, had it been in any way urged to the invention of new expressions of feeling, foreign to it.

As long as the lyrical form was recognised and required by the public, poets, who, in conformity with the purport of their poems, had become incapable of inventing melodies, varied, therefore, rather the poem, and not the melody, which they left untouched, and, for the sake of which, only gave the expression of their poetical thoughts an outward form, which they wedded, as a variation of the text, to the unchanged melody. The form, so extraordinarily rich, of Greek lyrical poetry, which has been handed down to us, and especially the songs of the chorus in the Tragic Writers, we are totally unable to explain as necessarily presupposed out of the *purport* of these poetic compositions. The purport of these songs, mostly didactic and philosophic, is generally so vividly opposed to the sensuous expression, in the extraordinarily rich rhythms of the verse, that we cannot understand this so manifold sensuous manifestation as proceeding from out the purport of the poetic invention of itself, but as presupposed by the melody, and obediently arranged to suit the unwavering pretensions of the latter. Even at the present day, we only know the most genuine folk's-melodies with more modern texts, afterwards invented, from one outward cause or another, for the already existing and favourite melodies, and—although, it is true, on a much lower level—even at the present day, French vaudeville poets especially, by writing their verses to known melodies, which they point out, without more ado, to the representer, pursue a course not unlike that of the Greek lyric and tragic poets, who certainly wrote their verses to melodies ready to their hands; primitively belonging to the most ancient lyric poetry, and living on in the mouth of the people—especially in religious observances—the wonderfully rich rhythm of which verses, now that we are no longer acquainted with the melodies in question, strike us with astonishment.

The exhibition, properly speaking, of the intention of the Greek tragic poet, is, however, laid bare, both in purport and form, by the whole course of their dramas, which proceeds undeniably from out the lap of lyric poetry, to the reflection of the understanding, as the song of the chorus finds an outlet in the iambic speeches, then only spoken, of the various acting personages. But that which these dramas still represent to us as so effective in their working, is precisely the lyric element retained in them, and strongly repeated in the principal points, while the poet acted with full consciousness of the employment of them, exactly as the didactic poet, who represented his didactic poems to the youth of the schools in lyrical song determined by the feelings. A more profound view shows us, however, that the tragic poet, in conformity with his intention, was less disguised and more honest when he enveloped this intention in the lyric garb than when he only expressed it candidly in the spoken speech; but on this didactic justification of artistic dishonesty is the speedy fall of Greek tragedy founded, because the people soon remarked that tragedy did not wish to determine its feelings involuntarily, but to determine its understanding arbitrarily. Euripides had to make a bloody atonement under the lash of Aristophanes for this lie, coarsely unveiled by him. That the poetry, always didactically more intentional, was obliged to become state-practical rhetoric, and at last even literary prose, was the uttermost, but perfectly natural consequence of the

* Tonarien. (To be continued.)

development of the understanding from out the feelings, and—for the artistic expression—of verbal language out of melody.

That melody, whose birth we are observing, is, compared to the maternal primitive melody, a perfect contrast, which, after our previous more elaborate observations, we have, at present, briefly to designate as a progression out of the understanding to the feelings—out of the verbal phrase to melody, opposed to the progression out of the feelings to the understanding—out of the melody to the verbal phrase. On the road pursued by the progression from verbal language to the language of tone, we have, up to the present, reached the horizontal surface of harmony, on which the word-phrase of the poet was mirrored as musical melody. As now, from this surface, we master the entire purport of the unfathomable depth of harmony, that primitively related lap of all tones, for the more and more extended realization of the poetic intention, and thus would sink the poetic intention as creative point, in the full depth of the maternal primitive element, in such a way as to determine every atom of this prodigious chaos of feelings as conscious, individual manifestation in a sphere which, however, never becomes narrowed, but continually more and more enlarged; the artistic progress, consequently, which is represented in the expansion of a definite, conscious intention, into an endless capability of feeling, with all its endlessness, however, exhibited definitively and accurately—shall now form the subject of our further and final exposition.

Let us, however, first determine one point, in order to render ourselves intelligible, with regard to our experience of the present day.

If we looked at melody, as only up to the present we have designated it, as the extreme height, necessarily to be scaled by the past, of the expression of feeling of verbal language, and on this height beheld the verbal verse already mirrored upon the surface of musical harmony, we perceive to our astonishment, on a closer examination, that this melody is, in appearance, altogether the same as that which forced itself from the unfathomable depths of Beethoven's music to the surface, in order to greet, in the "Ninth Symphony" the clear light of day. The appearance of this melody on the surface of the harmonic sea was rendered possible, as we saw, only through the impulse of the musician to look the poet steadily in the face; only the verbal verse of the poet was able to keep it on this surface, on which it would otherwise have been exhibited merely as a passing appearance, and, without such support, have speedily sunk down again into the depths of the sea. This melody was love's greeting from the woman to the man; the comprehensive "ever womanly" principle was here displayed more lovingly than the egotistical one of man, for it is love itself, and the womanly principle is only to be comprehended as the highest yearning of love, whether it be displayed in man or woman. The loved man still gave way to the woman at this wondrous meeting; what for the woman was the highest enjoyment, redolent of the sacrifice of an entire life, was for the man merely a passing intoxication of love. The poet, whose intention we are here stating, first feels so irresistibly and strongly impelled to the most heart-fervent union with the "ever-womanly" element of music, that he immediately seeks his redemption in it.

Through the redeeming love-kiss of this melody the poet is now initiated into the deep and endless secrets of woman's nature; he sees with other eyes, and feels with other senses. The bottomless sea of harmony, out of which the entrancing apparition rose towards him, is no longer an object of shyness, fear, or horror, as, like an unknown and foreign element, it previously seemed to his mind; not only can he now swim upon the billows of the sea, but—endowed with new senses—he dives down to the greatest depths. From out his solitary and frightfully spacious maternal house he had driven forth the woman, in order to await the approach of the beloved one; he now sinks with his bride, and renders himself acquainted with all the wonders of the deep. His intelligent sense pierces, clearly and deliberately, through everything, up to the primitive source, beginning from which he arranges the wavy columns, which shall rise to the light of the sun, roll on in joyful

billows in its rays, plash softly to the rustling of the west, or rear themselves manfully against the storms of the north; for the poet obeys also the breath of the wind—because that breath is nothing else than the breath of endless love; love, in whose joys the poet is redeemed, and in whose power he becomes the controller of the world.

Let us now examine, with sober eye, the government of the tone-married poet.

MOZART'S "DON GIOVANNI."

BY A. OULIBICHEFF.

(Continued from page 787).

As soon as Elvira has gone with Leporello, Don Juan tunes his mandoline, with which he has already provided himself, and like a gallant Spaniard begins to sing under the window of his fair one. We knew this, O excellent musician, from the moment that he sung: "Voi che sapete," when the ladies had given him the name of Cherubino. Fifteen or sixteen years have flown since then. The child has become a man, the soprano a baritone, the cherub a devil; the novice has devoured myriads of women, beginning with Rosina, who is the first among the "one thousand and three," in the rubric of *Isabella*. It will be understood that he sings no longer as he then did. The romanza for the page was composed with the greatest care; that was worth a countess. But this time he has to do only with a lady's maid, who would not understand poetical and too fine musical phrases; besides, Giovanni has long since discontinued the practice of written composition. If he has occasion for a song, a serenade, or a nocturno, he trusts to his talent for improvisation. And who could not have improvised the song: "Deh, vieni alla finestra" (Ah, come to the window), whose melody flows like the honey mentioned in the second verse, and those arpeggios of the mandoline which the ear would suggest to any one? But there are certain chords and a certain modulation in it, enough to convince a connoisseur that this dilettante understands more than he suffers to appear. Were it not for these dainty bits, these little artistic touches of harmony, one might make half a dozen pieces of this sort every day. True; but how many days would have to be spent in this way, before one would hit upon a melody of sixteen bars, which would be so smooth, so singing, and so singable for everybody, and withal a fresh and Southern melody, full of voluptuous languor and of amorous impatience; in a word, a melody which retains the bloom of its novelty and its magic for now fifty years that it has been used and abused? Try it, musical reader, and may you live long enough to be able to judge of the success of the trial yourself!

But Don Juan follows to-day a destiny which he is no longer to succeed in conquering. His best-planned adventures prove a miserable wreck. No one appears at the window, and instead of the fair one, the deluded gallant sees a mob of armed people approaching, whose intentions look very suspicious. It is Masetto and his friends, seeking to waylay him by night. This is a sort of compensation which fate grants to Don Giovanni; in return for his having to renounce a tête-à-tête with Elvira's maid, he gets an opportunity to give Masetto a lesson in the art of living; under shelter of his changed dress he goes boldly up to the crowd, gives himself out for Leporello, highly commends the plan of the brave people, and offers himself to conduct them—to himself. The strategic arrangements, the watchword, the mode of execution, the description of the foe, are contained in the aria, No. 4, "Metà di voi qua vadano" (Half of you go this way), a piece declaimed in a droll Italian manner, which is instrumented with infinite art and interest, and is full of fine, wicked, and comical intentions. Yet it produces but little effect, if the singer is not also a player, and if he does not take pains to make the words prominent. A clear enunciation constitutes the essential merit of the voice-part, since the melody and the figures are all in the orchestra. Equally necessary is it that the supernumeraries should step out of their machine-like condition, assume a human shape, and take a part in the action. They must understand how to listen to their new chief, to show themselves astonished at his

orders, and yet animated with the best spirit and the most heroic resolution to fight, thirty against one. Finally the person who represents Masetto must support his brother artists by expressive and comic pantomime. Without these accessories, which evidently lay in the intention of the composer, and without Italian words, whose harmonious prosody completes the voice-part, the effect, we repeat it, of this purely scenic aria is entirely lost.

"VEDRAI CARINO."

Don Juan, who has staid behind with Masetto, disgorges him throws him down, beats him black and blue, and leaves him lying on the ground for dead. But that he is not, as his cries convince us after the departure of the supposed Leporello. Zerlina runs in, examines his wounds and bruises, and finding none of them incurable, she promises the dear man a complete recovery if he will be more rational in future.

We must remark, or rather remind ourselves, that since the Final of the First Act Zerlina's heart has entirely changed. The man, who has almost publicly brought her to dishonor, has become really an object of abhorrence to her; and since Masetto is in fact her husband, why should she not love this Masetto? The poor devil has endured so much for her sake. Hence the remarkable difference between the aria "Batti, batti" and the air "Vedrai carino." The latter is far less elaborate, less ornate, and far shorter than the other. But is it inferior in point of beauty? I do not know; but if I had to choose between the two pieces, I should not hesitate to decide for the second. Many connoisseurs may be of the opposite view, and may adduce excellent reasons for it. As a musician I can guess their reasons; as a critic I subscribe to them in advance; as a dilettante I express my individual taste and declare it unconquered, that the reader may be on his guard against the partiality of the writer. Never has a melody made so deep and dear an impression on me, as that of "Vedrai carino." I have known it from my childhood, and it still sounds on with the same inexpressible charm in my ear and in my memory, where to this day it has remained without a rival.

"Vedrai carino" is, like so many pieces of our opera, super-dramatic music. When we hear it, we forget the text, we forget the person. There is no longer any Zerlina or Masetto. Something infinite, absolute, and verily divine announces itself to the soul. It is perhaps nothing but love, represented under one of the countless modifications by which it is distinguished in each individual, according to the laws of his nature and the peculiar vicissitudes of his fortune? No; the soul feels rather a direct effluence of the principle itself, from which all youth, all love, all joy, and every vital reproduction flows. The genius of the Spring's metamorphoses, he namely, whom the old theosophists called *Eros*, who disemboiled Chaos, who fructified germs and married hearts, this genius speaks to us in this music, as he has so often spoken in the murmurings of the brook that has escaped its icy prison, in the rustling of the young leaves, in the melodious songs of the nightingale, in the balmy odours which pervade the eloquent and inspiring stillness of a May night. Mozart had listened to and firmly held this ground-chord of this universal harmony; he arranged it for a soprano voice with orchestral accompaniment, and made of it the nuptial air of a young bride. Zerlina sings surrounded by the shadows of the marriage night, while just about to cross the threshold, at which virginity pauses, with prayer and trembling expecting the confirmation of the holy title of wife. In this place the aria becomes a genuine *scena* of Love, the source of life and of eternal rejuvenescence for all nature;—of Love, the Spring-time of souls and the most unstinted revelation of the all-goodness of the Creator. It is a marriage song for all that loves, conceived in the same spirit with the "Ode of Joy" by Schiller, allowing for the difference of tone and style between a dithyrambic and an eclogue. The theme, the image of the purest bliss, betrays none the less, that inexplicable and seldom justified exaltation, which in the fairest, poetic hours of our existence leads us to that unknown good, whereof all other goods of earth are only shadows and foretastes. A rhythm without marked accent; a harmony without dissonances; a modulation, which rests in the tonic and forgets itself, as if held fast there by some spell; a melody, which cannot separate itself from its ineffaceable *motif*; this tranquil rapture,

this soft ecstasy, fill out the first half of the air. After the pause, hosts of nightingales begin to sing in chorus in the orchestra, while the voice with exquisite monotony murmurs: "Sentilo battere, toccami quà." Then the same words are again uttered with the expression of passion; the heart of the young woman beats stronger and stronger; the sighs of the orchestra are redoubled, and the last vocal phrase, which bears the impress of chaste devotion, shows us the wife as she sinks softly upon the bosom of her husband. Mozart seems to have anticipated the desire of the ear, in that he lets the orchestra repeat the whole *motif* and the enchanting final phrases once again. He knew that the piece would be found too short, as it actually is the case.

THE SEXTET.

The scene changes. We see the *bujo loco*, (dark, retired place), to which Leporello has conducted Elvira. What is a *bujo loco*, which in the libretto is indicated only by these words, out of which our scene-shifters never know what to make? Upon our stage it shall be a deserted and half-ruined Gothic chapel, in the vicinity of the churchyard, which we see through an immense window by the light of the moon, with its monuments and the statue of the Commendatore towering above them all. Hereafter you shall see why I have preferred this decoration to all others. Let us preface with a few indispensable remarks, before we listen to the grand piece of music that is now about to commence.

Good judges agree pretty generally with the view of M. Castil-Blaze, who regards the sextet in *Don Giovanni* "as the most astonishing creation which the human mind has produced in the lyric dramatic style;" and yet the allegro of the sextet, which properly is the sextet, has been in Germany the subject of several criticisms, which at first appear unanswerable. It has been shown that the situation, resting solely and entirely on the development of a laughable illusion, can afford no opportunity for the use of the high tragic style, which reigns in this allegro. To this it has been added, that, if there be one among the acting persons to whom it would be most admissible and proper to rise to the tragedy of passion, that person is Elvira, who has been outrageously dealt with and humiliated in the eyes of witnesses; and that for this reason Elvira here, as in the quartet, ought to have taken the first voice-part. But this *role*, so entirely isolated in the action, is not once individualized in the music (we speak always of the allegro; Elvira, there, is nothing but a third soprano. Her part, continually dominated by others which tell more upon the ear, and hidden as it were in the middle of the harmony, only adds relief to the combinations of the *ensemble* but does not bring out the individuality of the person. There could not be a juster conclusion; Mozart himself would have been compelled smilingly to admit it. The sextet therefore would be nothing but a sublime mistake, which the friends of music would have to pardon in Mozart. But not so fast.

In the first place, let us recognize that the subject-matter of No. 6 is one of those thoughts which only the musician could have given to the poet. Da Ponte was neither so senseless, nor was he possessed of such deep musical knowledge, that he could of his own accord have arranged the scenic frame-work as we find it in the libretto. For what end would the poet have brought together and kept together all the characters in an apparently comic situation, unless he had wished with the aid of the maestro to enliven his public? But in that case he would have given the scene in dialogue, instead of putting one and the same text into the mouths of all.

Mille forbidi pensieri
Mi 'aggiran per la testa.
Che giornata, O stelle, è questa.
Che impensata novità.

That is neither tragic, nor comic, nor in any way dramatic; nothing is said by it; a good text for a fugue, which needs no sense, but only words and syllables. Mozart had it so on purpose, and there is perhaps not one of my readers who cannot guess *what* purpose. Mozart wanted the matter for a much more extended, more developed, and more learned composition than any of the preceding pieces; a text that should leave him elbow-room, and allow him to treat the voices like the orchestral parts, and be free to leave them and to take them up again, to group them and

divide them at his pleasure. He wished to make a sort of vocal symphony, with accompaniments of instruments; he wished to show himself, as they say, and in such a manner that through all the groups created by his fancy every one should clearly see the profile of the maestro, with that great Mozartean nose, so known to all who know enough to distinguish a C from a D. Every one should exclaim on hearing it: "O that is he! nobody in the world but he!" It is clear then that Mozart never intended to make of the sextet a music directly related to the action; at least not to the insignificant and senseless, action which the spectator has before his eyes. To what then could it relate? That shall the reader himself tell me, after he has listened attentively to both parts of the piece.

Elvira opens the scene with a noble and half pathetic song: "Sola, sola in bujo loco, palpitare il cor mi sento" (Alone in this dark place, I feel my heart beat). A certain shudder which runs through her at this time is felt in the chromatic figures of the stringed instruments. Leporello, thinking it a favorable moment, gropes round after the door, without listening to the somewhat fantastical voices, which sing in the violins and clarinets, that is to say in himself, awakened by the stillness, the darkness and anxiety "Piu che cerco, men ritrova questa porta sciagurata" (The more I seek, the less I find this cursed door). Finally he stumbles upon the door, and he is just about to run, when a sort of crisis arises in the harmony, which suddenly leads us out of B flat major into D major, the most beautiful, most striking, best introduced and simplest among all the unharmonic transitions. The trumpets cause a solemn and mournful sentence to resound in the new key, as if they were greeting a funeral procession; the tympani give a muffled sound; Anna appears covered with a black veil; her attendants, in mourning like herself for the Commander, carry torches before her. A sublime spectacle, interpreted by the elevation of the music, whose sense, a prophecy not clothed in words, is clear as day.

What spectator does not here recognize the victim adorned for the sacrifice? Anna has devoted herself to the subterranean powers, like those great men of antiquity, whose voluntary death was the foundation of their country's weal. Giovanni's hour draws nigh; and when this shall have struck, then Anna will have the power to hate him less and follow him. But till that hour there is no longer any rest for her. After she had left the accursed feast (the ball scene), she had felt the need of coming to pray and weep in the deserted chapel, which lies near the place in which her father was buried. Ottavio, who accompanies her, endeavors to console her: "Tergi il ciglio, o vita mia" (Wipe those eyelids, O my life). Never were melodious consolations expressed with tenderer devotedness, nor in a finer style of Italian song. But what can they avail against the immeasurable grief, whose reasons and secret tortures Ottavio will never learn! Listen to Anna's answer, those long dying notes, in sombre and complaining tones, in which the irresistible tendency to the grave is only too perceptible; listen to this self-renouncing power; this voice which breaks off in the presentiment of death; this life which flows out in a stream of tears: "Sol la morte, o mio tesoro, il mio pianto può finir" (Death alone, O my treasure, can end my weeping).

We can understand but too well what a wound of the soul gave this heavenly death-song to the predestined composer of the "Requiem;" and we can also comprehend that, in the presence of the consecrated victim, to whom but a few more hours remain on earth, there can be no more nonsense. Must not every ordinary interest and every egotism vanish in its contact with a moral greatness so sublime? and could an *ensemble* piece, in which Anna partakes, and leads the melody in the highest part, express any thing besides her soul's deep wound? Herein lie the high æsthetic grounds, which perfectly justify the style of the sextet,—indeed so far justify it, that the composer would have committed a monstrous mistake, if he had listened to the visible demands of the situation.

To the last sentence of Anna's solo is joined an instrumental figure, a sort of chromatic downward scale, which becomes the basis of the most diversified vocal combinations. On this are founded and in this expressed, one after another: Elvira's entreaties in behalf of the supposed Don Juan, "E il mio marito!

pieta!" (He is my husband! have mercy!); the astonishment of the other persons at sight of her: "E Donna Elvira questa, chio vedo" (This is Donna Elvira that I see); the universal and peremptory refusal: "No, no, no, no!" the cry of despair of the poor lovers: "Pieta! pieta!"; and at the end of the *andante* the general wonder, when the misunderstanding is cleared up: "Stupido resto, che mai sarà," and the minor strain of Leporello in the moment, in which he reveals his features, to avoid being killed: "Perdon, perdona Signori miei" (Pardon, good masters). With what divine cowardice the rogue saves his skin; how he howls, enough to shatter the nerves, if not to soften the heart; how the descending semi-tones weepingly intercede for him; how he curls himself up upon the ground and kisses everybody's feet; how touching he is in his self-compassion, how admirable in his humility! Who could have the heart to strike him? Even a dog would be pitied in this situation, however much he might deserve chastisement.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

OPERA.—Alboni, Jenny Lind, and Sontag appeared at Her Majesty's Theatre in 1849.

THE MUSICAL WORLD.

LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15TH, 1855.

From time to time, in an out-of-the-way corner of the morning papers, our readers may, perhaps, have observed an advertisement, professing to come from the "Society of British Musicians." They may also have enquired of their best-informed friends what it meant. We have ourselves lately fallen upon an advertisement with the same mysterious heading, stowed away among other announcements of public entertainments, somewhere in the neighbourhood of Mr. Woodin's *Carpet Bag*—as though it had accidentally dropped out of, and really belonged to, that Protean gentleman's collection of masks and faces. But the amount of ingenuity we possess was not sufficient to enable us to explain how it came there, who could have placed it there, or with what intent; it was put there at all.

"Society of British Musicians" is a big name. It must either signify an institution through means of which the musical art in Great Britain is represented by the great body of its professors, or it signifies nothing. Now it requires but small research to discover that no such institution exists at present, and that our professors are united neither for the purpose of representing the state and progress of the art, nor for any other purpose whatever. How, then, an ordinary person will demand, is the "Society of British Musicians" to be interpreted?

Those who are old enough to remember have probably not forgotten that more than twenty years ago a majority of our musicians clubbed together, and established a society for the exclusive performance of English compositions. This society, it may be recollected, after a promising start, fell to disunion and ultimately to pieces. The history is tedious, and need not be recapitulated; but it is notorious that what once constituted the "Society of British Musicians" no longer exists; that the ends for which the original scheme was promulgated are forgotten and abandoned; and that the whole vision has dissolved into air. In short, sensible people (even British Musicians) are now disposed to admit that the idea was a delusion, the scheme a rotten one, and the failure signal. Protection applied to the arts is downright sophistry. It was bad enough with agriculture, although there was a kind of plea for that, of which subtle and dishonest politicians

were enabled to make the most; but, art belonging to no country, protection could only tend in its case to sustain mediocrity to the detriment of excellence. Men of real talent, if they fail to get on without protection, must attribute it to some fault inherent in themselves, and for which society cannot fairly be made responsible. Men of no talent, if they are unable to make way, have no right to complain. It is absurd to argue that Mr. —, simply because he happens to be an Englishman, has a positive claim to be listened to in England, whether his works are deserving of a hearing or the contrary; and yet the doctrine was as good as professed by the early institutions of the "Society of British Musicians." They professed that doctrine, or they professed nothing. If they professed it, they professed a fallacy; but if they professed nothing, why did they combine?

At all events, it will hardly be denied that the genuine "Society of British Musicians" is defunct. Who and what, then—it may be appropriately asked—are the gentlemen annually coming forward with an appeal to the public, under that very extensive denomination? To what do they pretend?—on what grounds solicit patronage? Surely not on the pretext set forth in programmes issued from Mr. Erat's "Harp Saloon"! That would be simply preposterous. In a hundred private houses just the same kind of performance may be heard. Every composer who has a home, and a few musical desks and instruments, can invite his friends to come and hear his new productions, exactly as they might be heard at Mr. Erat's; and any musician who is merely a player may, if he have the means to receive them comfortably, summon the members of his intimate circle of acquaintance to listen to a given number of trios and quartets, in which himself and some chosen associates are to officiate.

Just so much and no more has been done of late years by a certain congregation of musical professors, who persist (we must say impertinently) in addressing the world as the "Society of British Musicians." Whoever among the *bona fide* public is (to "cull," as Mr. Micawber might say, "a figure of speech from our coarser national games") *flat* enough to pay for tickets, and attend the performances, must come away sorely astounded at the little realized after so high-sounding a proclamation. Even the fable of the mountain in labour is too weak to symbolise the disappointment he is likely to feel. A "Society of British Musicians," which from year to year does no more than entertain a "select" party with some half-dozen quartet meetings in a corner, is an anomaly. Hermogenes himself would be unable to defend. The farce is becoming ridiculous, and requires, besides, more lively actors than the gentlemen who assemble annually in Berners-street to sustain the interest. If it continues, however, we should be inclined to advise those British musicians, *not* members of what is called the "Society," to enter an action against it for defamation.

Now that the concerts given by M. Jullien at Covent Garden Theatre are ended (the last takes place to-night), it may not be out of place to say a few words in reference to a feature, which, year after year (since their commencement) has exercised an influence highly beneficial to the popular progress of music in this metropolis. We mean, of course, what are termed the Mozart, Beethoven, and Mendelssohn "Festivals." The word "festivals" may perhaps be regarded as somewhat too pretentious, but, all things considered, it can fairly be defended. To those who have the interest of music truly at heart it is nothing short of a "festival" to be able

to bear witness to the close attention and genuine enjoyment of those vast crowds M. Jullien invariably assembles at his bidding. We will pass over the nights devoted to Mendelssohn and Beethoven, as less remarkable—though, of course, not less gratifying—than the night dedicated to Mozart, for reasons that may easily be understood. The audience (both last season and this season) at the Mozart "Festivals" so *crammed* the theatre from top to bottom that it was almost impossible to move; and the word "promenade," applied to the pit, became a mockery. Yet there was nothing in the programmes that Mozart himself, had he been living, would not have directed with the pleasure and pride of a musician—shall we not say of the greatest among musicians? The E flat symphony, that ceaseless stream of melody (entire); the Jupiter symphony (entire), which, with all the melody and invention of the other, combines an exhibition of the secrets of art never excelled by any master, and never equalled except by Mendelssohn*; the pianoforte concerto in E flat (entire), a lengthened strain of pure and unadulterated music, "interpreted" by an artist (M. Billet) who has nothing in common with the predominating charlatanism of our day; the overture to *Zauberflöte*, and two vocal pieces (which were not produced) made up the sum total of the advertised programme on the last occasion. And this attracted an audience to which the audiences at Her Majesty's Theatre, in the height of Jenny Lind's popularity (when she was eight years younger) could hardly be compared. That the crowd was brought to the theatre by Mozart's music, appeared from the manner in which it was listened to and appreciated. The annals of musical performances present nothing more agreeable to contemplate. Mozart (like Beethoven and Mendelssohn) has his audience *now*—not merely in exclusive circles and so-called *Philharmonics*, but in the great mixed world of amusement seekers. M. Jullien believed it all along. He was laughed at by a host of clever people. He persisted in believing; his opponents persisted in deriding him. He tried, however, in spite of them, and succeeded—how triumphantly those who have taken the trouble to attend all the performances (instead of remaining at home and scoffing—like the independent and immaculate *Athenæum*) can best bear witness.

To hear that tranquil lovely symphony in E flat, and that marvel of contrivance (to say nothing of genius) the *Jupiter*, performed so admirably and without any attempt at display, before a *multitude* (for that is the word) which in the religious attention and earnest interest it exhibited was a shame and a lesson to the (absent) scorners, must have done good to the heart of every one present—or at least of every one that loves music and believes in its great influence on the happiness and refinement of his fellow-creatures.

And whom, except M. Jullien, have we (who love music, and desire ardently that a taste for it may be diffused and perpetuated among all of us) to thank for this? M. Jullien had the courage and the *faith* to believe that we were not every one of us "fast" men, "snobs," or sceptics; and that in musical matters neither *Punch*, which lampooned him, nor *The Athenæum*, which endeavoured to cough him down (the same *Athenæum*, only consistent in asserting that M. Gounod is a great

* In that very *Reformation Symphony* which (among others) the bankers, now abetting a loan for the aid of despotism and the knout—with a wretched cynicism (defended by the *Athenæum*)—withhold from the world.

genius, and that Mdle. Cruvelli does not know how to sing (!) were authorities. He had the courage and the faith to believe this; and the public has supported him. *The Athenæum* may write crooked ("freakish") English from now till twenty years hence; and the unsophisticated music-loving people will continue to believe that Mdle. Cruvelli is a grand singer, that M. Gounod is *not* a grand composer, and that M. Jullien has done a great deal more for music than *The Athenæum*.

MADemoiselle JULIE.—This unfortunate lady, whose dress caught fire during a performance at the Plymouth Theatre, on the 20th ult., expired on Sunday morning last, from the effects of the accident. Mdle. Julie excelled as a dancer, and had considerable ability as an actress. The benefit announced for her family will take place at the St. James's Theatre on Friday, the 21st. Those well-known theatrical amateurs, Messrs. Arcedekne, Markwell, and Willert Beale, have actively interested themselves in getting up the performance. Mr. Newcombe, the proprietor and manager of the Theatre Royal, Plymouth, with the generosity and friendly feeling which he always exhibits towards the artists connected with his theatre—one of the best-conducted and thriving in the provinces—has commenced a subscription for the relatives of Mdle. Julie by the handsome donation of twenty pounds, thereby setting an example which, we have little doubt, some of his brother directors in the metropolis will be disposed to imitate. We understand that Lady Elizabeth Bulteel, of Flete, whose benevolent disposition is so well known and appreciated in Devonshire, has strongly interested herself in the same praiseworthy cause.

Mrs. MACNAMARA.—The benefit of this esteemed lady, to which allusion was made in our last, is fixed for Tuesday evening next at the Haymarket Theatre. The same gentlemen amateurs, who have so liberally exerted themselves for Mdle. Julie, have taken this matter in hand, and the best results are anticipated. The programme is already issued, and embraces a great variety of attractions. The entertainment comprises, among other things, two popular farces, an act from one of Shakspeare's tragedies, a *ballad*, some vocal and instrumental music, and an appropriate address, written for the occasion by Mr. Albert Smith, which will be delivered at the commencement of the performance by the popular lecturer himself.

ST. MARTIN'S HALL.—A new entertainment, entitled *The Seven Ages of Woman*, was given for the first time in London, by Miss Emma Stanley, on Monday evening, in presence of a crowded audience, with entire success. The entertainment, as may be guessed, treats of the different stages of woman's life, the idea being evidently taken from Jaques' soliloquy in *As You Like It*. Miss Emma Stanley introduced several vocal pieces with the best effect. The lecture is well written, and the entertainment likely to prove attractive.

Mr. EDWARD MURRAY, so well known to the frequenters of the Olympic and Strand theatres, under the management of Mr. Farren, as well as to those of the Marylebone, when Mr. W. J. Wallack held the reins of management there, announces his benefit at the Strand theatre, on Thursday next, the 20th instant. Mr. and Mrs. Leigh Murray will afford their powerful support on the occasion, and Mr. Edward Murray himself, who is making rapid strides as a vocalist, will sing several favourite songs. The programme is highly attractive.

THE QUEEN has been graciously pleased to appoint Captain Harry Lee Carter, of Magdalen Hall, Oxford, late of "The Carabineers," and "Royal Fusiliers," paymaster to The Oxfordshire regiment of Militia.

SACRED HARMONY SOCIETY.—The first of the Christmas performances, this season, of the *Messiah*, took place at Exeter Hall, last night.

DUBLIN.—Mr. and Mrs. Howard Paul have been delivering a very humorous and well-varied entertainment at the Rotunda Room, and have attracted overflowing audiences. Not the least amusing part of the performance is the singing of Mrs. Howard Paul (late Miss Featherstone), who assumes the character of soprano, contralto, tenor, and bass, in four different languages.

M. JULLIEN'S CONCERTS.

THAT there are two distinct classes of the musical public in London—the one patronising the fashionable and costly (frequently the more costly the better), the other induced solely by consideration of what is really good, with cheapness a collateral recommendation—was satisfactorily proved on Monday night, when the Jenny Lind concert at Exeter Hall and the Beethoven Festival at the Royal Italian Opera both attracted immense crowds. Of the concert at Exeter Hall we have elsewhere spoken. The "Beethoven Night," at M. Jullien's, on Monday, was in success but a repetition of the Mozart and Mendelssohn "Nights." The same densely-packed audience exhibited the same attention and enthusiasm, and appeared to appreciate the music of Beethoven as well as that of the other two masters. The programme was as follows:

Overture—*Fidelio*; Concerto, violin—first movement (M. Sauton); *Scherzo* from symphony in A (No. 7); Concerto, pianoforte, C major (M. Billet); Symphony in C minor.

The performance was almost in every instance unexceptionable, and in the *scherso* from the symphony in A especially. The pianoforte concerto was admirably executed, and M. Billet again displayed his perfect mechanism and his thorough appreciation of the music of the great masters. The concerto was listened to with deep attention, and M. Billet greeted with loud applause at the conclusion. Praise was in an equal degree earned by M. Sauton, who produced so powerful a sensation in the movement from the violin concerto as to elicit a loud recall. He repeated the movement, or more properly, a part of it (commencing with his own *cadenza*) with increased effect. As usual, Mr. Alfred Mellon conducted both solos.

Madame Gassier's benefit took place on Tuesday. Another crowded house, almost riving with the "Classic Nights." Mad. Gassier is an immense favourite, and her name is a powerful attraction. It is lucky for her, nevertheless, that M. Jullien's concerts last weeks instead of months. What with singing nightly the most difficult bravuras, or romanzas even more exacting, and being almost invariably encored, she must possess the stamina of a Grisi to come unscathed from the six weeks' ordeal of M. Jullien's concerts. Madame Gassier was determined to show her admirers on Tuesday that her voice had lost none of its powers—nothing of its beautiful quality. She sang even better than ever, and was encored in everything. She commenced with the *aria d'entrata* of Leonora from *Il Trovatore*, and, being encored, gave the eternal, but much-admired Venzani's Valse, in which she never fails to create a *furor*. She next sang "Una voce," which being re-demanded, she substituted the *rondo finale* from *La Sonnambula*, which created so great an excitement that Madame Gassier was compelled to repeat that also. The last achievement was rewarded by showers of bouquets and tumultuous applause.

A new overture to Shakspeare's *Macbeth*, by Mr. Loder—one of our most accomplished musicians—was performed for the first time on the same evening. It is a work of higher aim than many of the composer's previous efforts of the kind, and was greatly admired by the connoisseurs. Mr. Loder has combined with much felicity the sombre colour necessary to illustrate the hero of the tragedy with the graphic characteristics of Scottish melody. He has interwoven some snatches from the music of Matthew Locke,* which help to make the work more popular and will render it a fit prelude to the tragedy. In the instrumentation the master hand was everywhere observable. The overture was conducted by Mr. Alfred Mellon.

M. Jullien's annual benefit took place on Saturday—a regular bumper—and Herr Koenig's on Thursday.

* Or Eccles.

ERNST.—This celebrated violinist, in consequence of the great success of his first concert at Dijon, has been encouraged to return to the Côte d'Or and give another, which promises to be like its precursor—a triumph. Ernst will remain two or three months in France—at Paris chiefly.

MADAME JENNY GOLDSCHMIDT.

THE first of a series of Sacred Concerts, under the superintendence of Mr. Mitchell, with Mad. Jenny Goldschmidt for the chief attraction, took place at Exeter Hall, on Monday evening, when *The Creation* was given. Mr. Benedict was the conductor, and the other singers were Mr. Lockey (tenor), and Mr. Lawler (bass.)

We have nothing new to say of Mad. Goldschmidt's performance in Haydn's very popular oratorio. When (as Mdle. Jenny Lind) she last attempted it (in the same place, on the 3rd of April, 1849) in the presence of Her Majesty and Prince Albert, we recorded our highly favourable impression at considerable length, nor did we find any reason, on Monday night, to modify it. Madame Goldschmidt's voice is as beautiful as ever, and her singing just as expressive. No one ever read "With verdure clad" more exquisitely; no one ever sang "On mighty pens," with greater power, or, indeed, displayed a chaster and more admirable conception of the music throughout. Exceptions might be made, here and there, to small matters; but it would be hypercritical to make them. No exception could possibly be imagined to the duet, "Graceful consort," which was absolutely perfect, and created more enthusiasm than anything else during the evening.

That Mad. Goldschmidt should be welcomed with unanimous gratification by the public it was natural to expect. The English public had not forgotten her, nor was she likely to have forgotten the English public. The hall was brilliantly attended; though, we think, but for the meddling of certain "speculators" (to whose doings we may possibly allude hereafter), it would have been still fuller. Why, we should like to know, when Mad. Jenny Goldschmidt is announced to appear in public, can she not be heard, like any other singer, for the prices advertised in bills and newspapers? Why this eternal jobbing and tampering with her name? But enough for the present.

We must state, in a line, that Messrs. Lockey and Lawler sang admirably; that the choruses went well; and that Mr. Benedict conducted, as usual, with masterly skill. The band will be better, we believe, on Monday next, at the second performance, when Mendelssohn's *Elijah* will be given, and M. Jullien will not absorb, in his colossal orchestra, nearly all the best available wind instruments.

CERRITO AT ST. PETERSBURGH.

[The following is from a correspondent who resides in the capital of all the Russias—a foreigner, as may be guessed from his style.]

St. Petersburg.

The celebrated Madame Fanny Cerrito's arrival at St. Petersburg was awaited with great impatience, when at last that wished-for day arrived. Her first *début* on the stage a few days ago at the Imperial theatre was in a new ballet, the *Armide*. The theatre, as may be expected, was quite full; the public all impatient to see the one so much talked about, and had such success in all the capital towns of Europe. With what triumph and applause she appeared; what grace she showed in performing; she certainly had an overpowerful success; she was called back several times and thanked by all. The public quite enchanted with her charming person, as well as with her dance, returned all home pleased and contented, until now she is all the talk, and I hope, dear readers, that those that have seen her will be able to judge and be of my opinion. A RUSSIAN.

November 13th, 1855.

DRESDEN.—A very numerously attended concert, at which the Countess Sauerma played the harp, was lately given for the benefit of the *Schillerstiftung*.

NEW YORK.—Mad. De la Grange is said to receive £480 per month, as *prima donna* of the Italian operatic company.

TRIESTE.—Meyerbeer's *Prophète* still continues its career of unexampled prosperity.

PADUA.—The new theatre was opened with Signor Verdi's *Rigoletto*.

PROVINCIAL.

MANCHESTER.—(From our own Correspondent).—The second concert of the Classical Chamber Music Society was held at the Town Hall, King-street, on Thursday evening, the 6th instant. The executants were:—Mr. Charles Hallé, Messrs. Sainton, Carrodus, Baetens, and Paque. The following was the programme:—

PART I.—Quartet—two violins, tenor, and violoncello, (G, No. 81), Haydn; sonata—pianoforte, (E minor, op. 90), Beethoven.

PART II.—Quintet, (E flat, op. 44), Schumann; fantasia, violin, Rigoletto, Sainton; miscellaneous selection, pianoforte—Saraband (E minor), Bourée and Gigue (A minor), S. Bach; 3rd ballad, (A flat, op. 47), Chopin.

The room was crowded. A stringed quartet is a rarity at these concerts. Dr. Schumann's quintet was introduced here at the first concert last season, and was most brilliantly played. Mr. Hallé played Beethoven's Sonata from memory. It was new to the audience. Mr. Sainton's Fantasia was loudly applauded.—M. Jullien comes for a week at Christmas, with his band in greater force than ever. For the first time he will be heard at our Theatre Royal. The nights announced, are the 20th, 21st, 22nd, 24th, and 25th; the last being Christmas Day. The selection for that performance, we presume, will be sacred. Madame Gassier, of course, comes with him.

PLYMOUTH.—Miss Emma Fitzpatrick, Mrs. Boyce, and Mr. Swinbourne, continue to attract crowded audiences at the theatre. The pieces are all got up with Mr. Newcombe's usual liberality.

WORCESTER.—The juvenile members of the Cathedral Choir gave their annual concert at the Natural History Rooms last week, before a large audience. Mr. Redgrave presided at the pianoforte. The concert gave general satisfaction, and several encores were awarded.

OTLEY.—On Saturday evening, December 1, the Bramley Temperance Brass Band gave a concert in the large room of the Mechanics' Institute. Mr. Whitley was the leader. The performances were excellent.

LEEDS.—Mr. Spark gave his second musical entertainment (in continuation of the Recreation Society's Concerts), last week in the Leeds Music Hall. The gallery was filled by the labouring classes, and the attendance greater than at the first concert. The artists were Mrs. Sunderland, Miss Mary Newbold, Mr. Delavanti, and a chorus of sixty. Several encores were awarded. The concert gave satisfaction.

BOLTON.—A miscellaneous concert was given in the Temperance Hall, on Thursday evening, Dec. 6th, under the auspices of the Mechanics' Institution. The vocalists acquitted themselves in a creditable manner.

BLACKBURN.—On Wednesday last the Philharmonic Society gave their second concert in Park Lane School, which was kindly given for the occasion by James Pilkington, Esq., M.P. The concert was well attended. The performance went off well.

MANCHESTER.—Another sacred selection was given on Monday; the first part composed of pieces from *The Messiah*, sung by Miss Shaw, Mrs. Winterbottom, Mr. Cooper, and Mr. Delavanti, assisted by the members of the Sacred Harmonic Society. Mr. Henry Walker was organist and conductor. The second part consisted of the ordinary music of a Monday evening concert. Mr. Walker played a fantasia on the concertina, accompanied on the pianoforte by Herr Siemers. These concerts are drawing to a close.

AMERSHAM.—(From a Correspondent).—The young gentlemen of Mr. West's school gave their second annual musical entertainment on Thursday evening. The programme comprised a number of pieces, vocal and instrumental, which, for the most part, making due allowance, were creditably executed. The performance was directed by Mr. W. H. Birch. The band consisted of twelve concertinas, pianoforte, harmonium, and cornet.

COVENTRY.—On Monday evening last, the 10th instant, Mr. T. S. Partridge gave the first of a series of "Concerts for the People," in the Theatre Royal. The vocalists were Mrs. Beale, of Birmingham, Mrs. Paget, B.A.M., and Mr. Paget, who gave a selection of songs, duets, and trios. A small but efficient band performed some popular pieces. The National Anthem concluded the entertainment.

OXFORD.—The second and last concert of the University Amateur Musical Society for the present term took place on Thursday week at the Town-hall, in presence of a crowded and fashionable audience, who exhibited the enthusiasm if not the discrimination of musical critics. The vocal department was creditable to the performers and their instructor, Dr. Elvey. We are unable to furnish the names of all the gentlemen who took part in the programme, as some of them are invariably shielded from vulgar curiosity—why, we are at a loss to conceive; since, if they

consent to put in a *personal* appearance, why not allow it to be recorded? The undertaking they support reflects credit on the university and themselves, and this exhibition of modesty in an anonymous programme is a mistake. I am able, however, to single out for commendation Mr. Beckwith of New College, and Mr. Duncombe of Brazenose. The first possesses a fine bass voice, but a style and feeling rare in an amateur. The orchestra wore a faint aspect of improvement. The three overtures attempted did not present the same scope for confusion and mistakes as before in the *andante* and *allegro* of Beethoven's symphony, No. 2. There was an absence of that tremendous conflict on the part of string, wind, and parchment, and the gymnastic demonstrations, that kept the audience in good humour a week or two since. Mr. Capel Hanbury is one of our best amateur pianists. His musical feeling and execution are alike admirable. Mendelssohn's *Andante* and *Variations* was exceedingly well rendered by himself and his talented coadjutor Mr. Joy, and elicited the warmest applause. The duet for flute and pianoforte (Bucher and Benedict) performed by Mr. O. Hanbury and Captain Harry Lee Carter, was loudly encored, and both gentlemen were compelled to re-appear and repeat the concluding part. Captain Carter's concertina solo also met with a singular compliment. We hear divers hints as to certain alterations during next campaign, which we trust may be carried out. The vocal elements of the society are really good, and with "weeding" and a *strict* attention to rehearsals there is no reason why the instrumental department should not become nearly as efficient.

DURHAM.—The Beale troupe, consisting of Madame Clara Novello, Miss Messent, Herr Reichardt, Signors Sivori and Piatti, Mr. Land, and Arthur Napoléon, gave a concert in the new Town Hall, here, on Friday the 7th. inst., which drew a very large audience, principally from the aristocracy and students of the university.

PARIS.

(From our own Correspondent.)

THERE is little news this week in the musical world of Paris. Mlle. Cruvelli has definitely rejected the flattering and unprecedented offers of M. Crosnier, and at the end of this month she quits the Grand Opéra and the stage for ever. Her marriage will take place early next year, and unless unforeseen circumstances should induce her, like Madame Sontag, to resume the duties of her old profession, she is lost to the lyric drama. For the present, at least, her loss is simply irreparable. She has no successor. Possessed of a voice which, for compass and purity, has rarely been equalled, endowed with extraordinary energy both of body and mind, and with powers as an actress of the very highest order, she has gone on steadily improving since her first appearance in public, until at length the voice of envious and disparaging criticism has become mute and silenced. Madame Borghi-Mamo has been engaged by M. Crosnier for a term of three years, at a salary of 78,000 francs (£3,120) for the first year, 84,000fr. (£3,360) for the second, and 96,000fr. (£3,840) for the third year. Madame Borghi, with a mere contralto voice, will find it difficult, if not impossible, to sing in most of the stock pieces of the Grand Opéra. What will become of *L'Africaine*, and what will Meyerbeer say to this arrangement? It is somewhat strange that when the *prima donna* of the Grand Opéra of Paris—herself of German origin—quits the stage, the management can find no one to replace her except at the rival Italian establishment. Indeed, Mlle. Cruvelli herself succeeded to Madame Bosio, another foreigner. Where are all the *soprani* and *contralti* of French extraction, and what is the Conservatoire about? Surely, some native talent can be found for that theatre where Mlle. Falcon, Madame Stoltz, and so many others won their laurels.

M. Delajarte has written some lively music for a pretty little trifle, in one act, produced at the Théâtre Lyrique. M. Henri Boisseaux is the author of the libretto, the plot whereof is so neat and well-timed as to merit a notice. Thérèse is the prettiest girl of the *quartier*—Marcel, a youth of probity and merit, hard-working and industrious, by trade a carver. They love and are married before the mayor of the eleventh *arrondissement*. Here they are on their wedding night, cooing as turtle doves in their nest. Their happiness were complete, if Uncle Vincent—the most droll and original of uncles—had not given Marcel a rendezvous at midnight. What an hour to choose on such an occasion! Marcel is furious, but he has promised

obedience, and that his wife shall know nothing about it. How can a carver be false to his word? Midnight sounds, and Marcel, with stealthy step, proceeds to the appointed place. How miserable is poor Thérèse, abandoned at such an hour, and on such a night! A knock is heard at her door. She bounds to open it. If it were Marcel! he is forgiven at once. But alas! no Marcel appears. An Auvergnat, stupid and half drunk, but honest withal, places in Thérèse's hands a box hermetically sealed, and on which Mr. Chubb might practise in vain. She turns and re-turns the mysterious case, without being able to divine its contents. Suddenly a jealous inspiration flashes across her. It can be nothing but Marcel's love-letters sent back by some disappointed fair one—perhaps a lock of her hair. She rushes to a neighbour in quest of aid, help, and counsel. On his side Marcel returns exasperated. Uncle Vincent has slipped into his hand a morsel of paper, containing a wretched little key, after which he has dismissed him, refusing all explanation. Was ever mystification more impertinent and ill-timed? Such jesters should be dealt with in a summary way; but Vincent is old, and an uncle. However misfortunes never come single, and judge of the wrath, astonishment, and despair of Marcel, returned home, and finding his nest empty and his wife fled.

She comes back presently, having failed to free the lock of her box; and our loving pair—each suspecting the other—pout and pet, break the chairs, and upset the wardrobe. At length all is explained. Marcel's little key opens the little box, and therein are contained ten notes of one thousand francs, which uncle Vincent has amassed for the *dot* of Thérèse.

Meillet (Marcel) acted and sang with great spirit, and Mlle. Esther Caye, who gained the chief prize last year at the Conservatoire, made her *début* as Thérèse. Her voice, a high soprano, is fresh and pure, and she sang and acted with ease and good taste. She is a decided acquisition for the Théâtre-Lyrique, which is about to lose its great attraction, the fair Marie Cabel.

La Dame aux Camélias, after many wanderings and varied adventures, has at length been transported to the classic boards of the Théâtre-Français. *La Joconde* is the name MM. Regnier and Paul Foucher have bestowed upon her ladyship, who now disputes the scene with *Phédre* and *Camille*, with *Polyeucte* and *Elmire*. Notwithstanding the ability with which the play is written, and the unquestionable merit of the actors, the production of such a piece at the Théâtre-Français cannot but "make the judicious grieve." The subject—never one of the best—has been completely exhausted, fairly trailed through mire and filth, by Gymnase and Vaudeville, at the Porte St. Martin, and the Palais Royal. Our authors have done their best for *La Joconde*, but they cannot change the Ethiopian's skin, or make of their heroine aught but a mercenary mistress. Let me sketch the subject of the "comedy"—so called in the bills—and its plot.

Mlle. Louise Clavière is the mistress of a prince who wanders from capital to capital, displaying his luxury, and seeking relief from his *ennui*. The lady, as she herself avows, has no excuse for her position. She is not the victim of irresistible passion, nor is she seduced by perfidy or violence. She reflects, and, finding she is poor, luxurious, and good-looking, sells herself to the first good bidder. The prince is the happy man, and though she feels no affection for her purchaser, the sale assured her equipages, jewels, lace, and gimcracks. All Florence witnesses her shame; now in the *calèche* of her keeper; now in his opera-box; and, as she bore an extraordinary resemblance to a celebrated portrait from the pencil of Leonardo di Vinci, they named her "La Joconde." Thus was she notorious, mercenary, and shameless. Stigmatised with an indelible stain, she was branded with a *soubriquet*; as are all her fellows who borrow their title of infamy from a flower, a picture, and scandalous adventure, a battle, or a conquest; whether they be called "Dame aux Camélias" or "Joconde," "Pomaré," or "Mogodor." One evening, being more than usual *ennuyée*, La Joconde is at the Opera, and sees in the box opposite her own M. Maurice de Guitré, chief of the French legation at the court of Tuscany. She is seized with a sudden passion for the young Frenchman. In one of those sudden fits of "fancy" which are by no means uncommon among those of her class, Louise, whose

heart had never throbbed for man, quits her old prince and elopes with M. de Guitré. Maurice has been slighted by his first love, Hélène de Morsay, whom he imagines to have jilted him for the Marquis de Fontenac. It was, however, to save her father from ruin that Hélène devoted herself. She married the marquis with despair in her soul, and left France without having been able to inform Maurice of the cause of her apparent infidelity. He becomes a misanthrope, a hater of his race, to which he has sworn eternal enmity. However, in favour of *La Joconde*, he makes an exception, and for her he will sacrifice the world and the world's opinion. He marries her, and hopes for his reward in the honour, virtue, probity, and love of a woman who had sold herself for a prince's gold. Knowing right well that society would not receive one whose beauty and whose fatal resemblance to the picture of Leonardo, had given her so damning a celebrity, he retires with her to his chateau. There they are apparently happy for some six months. Their happiness, however, is but superficial; restless and clouded, as though their life was but a dream, and they feared an awakening sound. Inaction and obscurity at length began to weigh heavily on Maurice, who was born for a life of occupation and brilliancy. Louise, discovering that her husband's heart is not entirely hers, and his aversion to Hélène, and the bitter sarcasms whereof he makes her the object, seem to hide some other sentiment or to cover vague regrets for a lost ideal. However, their existence, though not free from trouble, seems peaceable enough on the surface. They are charitable and kind-hearted, loved and respected by the poor around their chateau, and they have two children whom they adore. But their position is false, and grief and chastisement are at hand. Hélène de Fontenac returns from Brazil, rich and a widow, to offer Maurice her hand, and a heart which he had grievously wronged.

As though this were not punishment sufficient, Lucien Clavière, the brother of Louise, whom she had long thought to be dead, appears on the scene, as her judge and the avenger of his family's honor. And thus does their abode, built on the sand of bad passions, crumble away like a house of cards, the sport of children. Maximilien de Fontenac has seen *La Joconde* at Florence, and knows her history. He makes proposals better suited to a mistress than a wife, and is killed by Maurice in a duel. The marriage contract is found defective, and Maurice may quit *La Joconde* for Hélène, whom he now knows to be devoted and constant. He refuses to desert the mother of his children. Lucien pardons his sister, and Hélène remains a widow, true to the memory of her first love.

Madame Arnould Plessy has made a hit with *La Joconde*, a character which at first sight seems in no manner suited to her. She throws herself into the part with a passion and ardour little to have been expected from her, and yet she was never immoderate in her action. *La Joconde* is in a perpetual state of anguish, grief, and despair—knowing no repose, no joy, no hope. The part is one continual torture, remorse, and terror from the rising of the curtain to its fall. Mad. Plessy exhibited the most wonderful physical energy, and her voice at the conclusion was as fresh as at the beginning of the piece. Never was a more genuine "succès de larmes," and the Empress, who was present at the second performance, shed tears most abundant and sympathetic. M. Geoffroy is somewhat old, and hardly the Adonis for whose heart two fair women would dispute. However, he did his best for M. de Guitré, though the character is difficult to "fix," as brother Jonathan would say. M. Bressant looks well in his naval uniform, and bears himself as becomes a man as Lucien Clavière. Mdlle. Fix is fascinating and graceful, as is her wont, in the part of Hélène de Fontenac. Rushing from one end of the world to the other in search of her beloved, and finding him in the arms of another, Madame de Fontenac resigns herself to her fate with a stoicism worthy of any Attic philosopher. How charming an actress is Mdlle. Fix! Put her in any part: no matter how subordinate or inconsequent, she will always present it in the most attractive colours. Her face, her expression, her eyes, her gait, are each and all perfect in their way, while her toilette, so easy and with so little apparent study, is a marvel of perfection. Her voice is "gentle, soft, and low;" yet so clear that no whisper is missed. Her intelligence is unerring, and, though

neither a Rachel nor a Mars, she is emphatically the most "lady-like" actress on the French stage. M. Regnier allotted to himself the worst part of his own play, and one for which the actor had little to thank the author. However, the success in the latter capacity was so great, and his utility in the former has so often been proved, that he must have been thoroughly satisfied with the reception afforded to *La Joconde*.

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE.

"THE NIGHTINGALE'S DEATH SONG."

To the Editor of the Musical World.

December 10th, 1855.

SIR,—In your flattering notice of my little song, "The Nightingale's Death Song," in the last number of *The Musical World*, you observe that I have "Somewhat unceremoniously dedicated the words in conjunction with my music." It is right, therefore, that you should allow me to explain that the first edition of the song in question (my earliest musical publication) appeared about twenty-three years ago, during the lifetime of Mrs. Hemans, who had written the words to be set to music, and that by her express desire they were included in the dedication.

I have the honour to be, your obedient servant,

J. L. ELLERTON.

OR, NOT ON.

To the Editor of the Musical World.

SIR,—In our letter to you, published in your last number, December 8th, the following error occurs: "the interests of French citizens, on the honour and glory of France." It should be "or the honour," &c.
December 13, 1855.

Yours respectfully,

J. AND J. HOPKINSON.

FOREIGN.

ST. PETERSBURG.—(December 1. Extract from a private letter.)—"Since my last communication announcing the debut of Madame Bosio, in *Rigoletto*, she has played in three other operas—*I Puritani*, *Don Pasquale*, and *Il Trovatore*—with the same success. The *Trovatore*, above all, has created a sensation, as much through its novelty as through the manner in which it was performed. The *cavatina* for Leonora in the first act, the romance in the fourth act, the "Miserere" and the duet with the barytone, delighted the audience, who re-demanded the romance and the "Miserere," and overwhelmed Madame Bosio with applause. Tamberlik had also a prodigious success in this opera, which, in every respect, was effectively got up. The theatre has been well attended, and the management leaves nothing to be desired. The *mise-en-scène* and the richness of the costumes in the *Trovatore* were perfect.

BERLIN.—Last week, the Königlicher Domchor commenced its series of concerts at the Singacademie, in the presence of the King, the Queen, and a most brilliant audience. There was not a single empty place in the room. The first part was composed of Palestrina's "Kyrie," Vittoria's "Impropria," Bernabei's "Agnus Dei," and Caldara's "Crucifixus." The second part included Johann Sebastian Bach's Motet for eight voices, "Komm, Jesu, komm," Immanuel Bach's Motet, "Herr, wenn ich dich nur habe," Mozart's "Miserecordias Domini," a prelude and fugue by J.S. Bach, and Beethoven's variations in C minor—the two last pieces being played by Herr von Bülow.—On the morning of the 2nd instant, a grand musical demonstration was held, in the Singacademie, by the various musical institutions and soloists of the capital, in honour of Dr. Franz Liszt. Herr Grell made a complimentary speech in the name of the Singacademie. Stern's Gesang-Verein sang a selection from *Elijah*. Herren von Bülow and Laub executed a duet by MM. Kullak and Vieuxtemps, and Herr Laub furthermore performed, alone, Bach's fugue in G minor. Herr Theodor Fornes sang one of Dr. Liszt's songs, and Mdlle. Meyer, the grand air from Gluck's *Orpheus*.—There is nothing new at the Royal Operahouse.—We have the authority of Meyerbeer himself for stating that *Robert le Diable* has been represented at one hundred and fifty-two different theatres, in various parts of the world. It was performed fifteen years ago in the Mauritius and Rio de Janeiro.

REVIEWS.

- No. 1.—"TREUE LIEBE" (True Love.)
 No. 2.—"WANDERLIED" (Parting Song.)
 No. 3.—"LIEBE UND GLÜCK" (Love and Happiness.)
 No. 4.—"RHEINWEIN-LIED" (Rhine-Song.)
 No. 5.—"AENNOHEN VON THARAN," Serenade.
 No. 6.—"DER GUTE KAMERAD" (The Faithful Friend), for the pianoforte. By Adolph Gollmick.

We are not surprised at seeing a second edition of these well-written and engaging *bagatelles*, which are not only extremely useful for teaching in schools, but attractive as drawing-room pieces, that everybody can understand, few will not be pleased with, and performers of moderate capacity may execute with very little practice. Our very favourable opinion of the merits of each of them respectively was given in the *Musical World* some months since, and a new examination affords us no reason to alter it. Herr Gollmick might bestow his time and abilities to advantage in composing another series of the same length and character.

- No. 1.—"THREE-PART SONGS," for two sopranos and a contralto. Composed by Jules Benedict.
 No. 2.—"T'AMO," Romanza da P. D. Guglielmo.
 No. 3.—"IL LABBRIO." Words by Francesco Gianni. Music by P. D. Guglielmo.
 No. 4.—"UNO SGUARDO," Parole di M. Palazzolo. Musica di P. D. Guglielmo.
 No. 5.—"DUE ROMANZETTE." Two Italian songs, with pianoforte accompaniment. The English words adapted by John Oxenford, Esq. Composed by Francesco Berger.
 No. 6.—"SWEET LOVE, GOOD NIGHT." Song. Written by Edwin Ransford. Set to music by John L. Hatton.
 No. 7.—"THE MERRY DANCE BENEATH THE OAK." Song. Written by Mr. Ransford. The music composed by John L. Hatton.
 No. 8.—"GOOD-NIGHT, BELOVED." Serenade. Written by Longfellow. The music composed by Edward Holmes.
 No. 9.—"BOYHOOD." Ballad. Written by Charles Whewall, Esq. The music composed by Edward Holmes.
 No. 10.—"OFFERTORY FROM A MASS IN B FLAT," "Amplius Lava Me." Solo. Composed by J. L. Ellerton.
 No. 11.—"THE FISHERMEN." Song. The poetry by the author of "Alton Locke." The music composed by T. M. Mudie.
 No. 12.—"THE EXILE." Song. The poetry by Thomas Hood. The music composed by T. M. Mudie.
 No. 13.—"THE SUMMER'S CALL." Song. The poetry by Mrs. Hemans. The music composed by T. M. Mudie.

The three part-songs of Mr. Benedict, for soprano and contralto (No. 1), are among the most charming of his vocal compositions. They are intended to be sung without accompaniment; but it would be as well to use the pianoforte part which the composer has added, when the skill of the vocalists is not first-rate. We cannot say which of the three songs we prefer; and, as they are all in different styles, a declaration of preference is not called for. "Thoughts of Home" (in B flat) is gracefully tender; "The Forest-Home" (in A) is full of healthy vigour; and "The Warbler of the Forest" (in E flat) is in another style just as spirited. We may remark, in conclusion, that the voices are written for, and their effect, both alone and in combination, calculated, in a manner, that might be anticipated from one of Mr. Benedict's long experience and intimate knowledge of such matters.

No. 2, Signor Guglielmo's *Romanza*, "T'Amo," has we believe attained considerable popularity, and though a simple and unpretending affair, we are not surprised at it, since, without betraying any strong originality, it has a certain graceful turn of melody, peculiarly Italian, which never fails to please, and in the present instance, the song being well written, deserves to. No. 3, "Il Labbro," and No. 4, "Una Sguardo," by the same composer, are equally trifles, equally well written, and have both lively, catching tunes, which the dullest ear can hardly fail to appreciate. Such songs as these of Signor Guglielmo are calculated to please the ear, without corrupting the taste, which is more than we can say of nine-tenths of modern ballads—Italian, German, French, and English.

What we have just written may apply almost as well to the first of Mr. Berger's *Due Romanzette* (No. 5), "The Fisherboy," with the reservation that the pianoforte accompaniment is much more difficult and ambitious than in the case of Sig. Guglielmo. But this arises chiefly on account of a storm, which comes on and goes away in the middle verse of the poetry. The more simple part of the song, however, pleases us the best, since the melody is pretty and unaffected.

The Melody of "Dearest, I will fly with thee!" begins much like the slow movement in a well-known trio from Weber's *Der Freyschütz*. The song altogether, short as it is, and well enough in its way as an example of modern German romance, with "characteristic" accompaniments, pleases us much less than No. 5,—the melody being not nearly so natural, while the modulation is much too redundant for a composition of so little pretence. The English versions of both songs have been made from the Italian by Mr. John Oxenford, with the feeling of a poet and the ear of a practised versifier.

If a German name (why not "Czapek?") were attached to Mr. J. L. Hatton's charming setting of Mr. Edwin Ransford's pretty serenade (No. 6—"Sweet love, good night") no end of English singers and songstresses would speedily take it in hand. But Mr. Hatton, not being unfortunately of Teutonic origin, must take his chance of neglect. In stating, however, that the song before us from his familiar pen is unaffectedly a "gem," as the term goes, we do our best to recommend it.

No. 7, "The merry dance beneath the oak," although a neat and well written song, is a "gem" of very inferior water to the other. It is at the best a lively bagatelle.

In No. 8, Mr. Edward Holmes, by an elegant and musician-like setting of Longfellow's serenade "Good night, beloved," has for once rescued that genial and tender poet from the musical common-places in which he has, of late, been so continually and forcibly dragged.

No. 9—"Boyhood," by the same composer, is nothing like so good, and, but for a kind of careful research exhibited in the harmony, might pass, only that Longfellow is not here the poet (Mr. Charles Whewall officiating in that light, and apostrophising in a lofty strain the memory of his youthful days) for one of those common-places to which we have alluded.

No. 10.—"An Offertory from a Mass in B flat," by Mr. J. L. Ellerton, is good enough to have warranted the publication of the entire mass. The melody is flowing and vocal, and well suited for a contralto voice. The harmony is pure, as is generally the case in Mr. Ellerton's compositions, and the accompaniment, arranged with great skill for the pianoforte, reveals, here and there, glimpses of instrumentation which we should like to hear realised in the orchestra.

Nos. 11, 12, and 13.—Three songs by Mr. T. M. Mudie, would all be attractive, if alone for the musical qualities they betray. The first, ("The Fishermen,") in A minor, is a very beautiful setting of a quaint and characteristic metrical legend by the author of *Alton Locke*. Each verse has its peculiar character, developed with more or less modification in the accompaniment. The second in E ("The Exile,") will find fewer admirers, probably among those who are exclusively wedded to the "romantic," but, as "absolute music," to use Herr Wagner's expression, it is entitled to still greater praise. Both the melody and the harmony display a purity which in a great measure belongs to the greatest of schools, that of Mozart, of whom Mr. Mudie is, no doubt, a devoted partizan, not to say worshipper. The third, is the simplest of all ("The Summer's call"), and for that reason has probably greater chances of popular success, but there is the consolation, that though less pretending than its companions, it does not evince an atom less of that unleavened musical sentiment which is one of their charms and strongest recommendations.

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